

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ADDIS 01407 01 OF 02 280526Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 OPR-02 CU-04 EB-08 SIL-01
LAB-04 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 HA-05 /089 W
-----009592 280543Z /21

R 271400Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7812

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ASECTION 1 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 1407

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ASCH, PEPR, ET, US
SUBJ: POSTER INCIDENT AT AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

SUMMARY: MOFA EXPRESSED DISPLEASURE TO CHARGE OVER
FACT THAT EMBASSY ON ITS OWN AUTHORITY ORDERED REMOVAL
MARCH 18 FROM AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL GROUNDS OF
SEVERAL POSTERS PUT UP BY LOCAL EMPLOYEES' UNION, CON-
TAINING REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL SLOGANS, SOME OF WHICH
WERE OFFENSIVE TO US. CHARGE EXPLAINED TO MOFA THAT
POLITICAL ACTIVITY ON SCHOOL GROUNDS WAS CONTRARY TO
STATUTES OF SCHOOL ASSOCIATION, THAT ACTION WAS TAKEN
TO DEFUSE VOLATILE SITUATION, AND THAT COMPROMISE AGREE-
MENT HAD SINCE BEEN REACHED WITH UNION. END SUMMARY.

1. RECENT INCIDENT AT AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL (ACS)
INVOLVING LOCAL LABOR UNION OF ETHIOPIAN EMPLOYEES HAS
CAUSED MINOR IRRITATION WITHIN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS (MOFA).

2. UNDER TERMS OF ITS AGREEMENT WITH UNION, SCHOOL
MAKES ONE OF ITS ROOMS AVAILABLE FOR TWICE WEEKLY
UNION MEETINGS. ON MARCH 13 UNION PUT SEVEN POSTERS
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ADDIS 01407 01 OF 02 280526Z

ON WALL OF THAT ROOM, CONTAINING REVOLUTIONARY SLO-
GANS, MOST OFFENSIVE OF WHICH WERE "SHAME IS THE STA-
PLE OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM*" AND "RED TERROR WILL
CONTINUE." SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION ADVISED EMBASSY
MARCH 14 AND SOUGHT ADVICE.

3. IN MY CAPACITY AS ACTING HEAD OF AMERICAN COMMU-

NITY IN ETHIOPIA, I INFORMED MOFA AMERICAN AFFAIRS
DIRECTOR BERHANE DERESSE AS COURTESY MARCH 15 OF MY
DECISION TO HAVE ALL POSTERS REMOVED ON GROUNDS THAT
POLITICAL POSTERS OF ANY KIND HAVE NO PLACE ON PRE-
MISES OF FOREIGN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION. THIS DECI-
SION WAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATUTES OF SCHOOL ASSO-
CIATION, WHICH READ:

"STATEMENT OF NON-POLITICAL CHARACTER

THROUGH ITS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, THE ASSOCIATION SHALL ATTEMPT
TO PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION. IN ALL
OTHER RESPECTS, THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION SHALL BE
COMPLETELY NON-POLITICAL. NONE OF ITS ACTIVITIES SHALL INCLUDE
MAKING PROPA-

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ADDIS 01407 02 OF 02 280445Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 OPR-02 CU-04 EB-08 SIL-01
LAB-04 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 HA-05 /089 W
-----009372 280546Z /21

R 271400Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7813

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 1407

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ASCH, PEPR, ET, US
SUBJ: POSTER INCIDENT AT AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

GANDA, OR PARTICIPATING IN OR ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE, ALTER
OR CHANGE THE POLITICAL PROCESSES IN ETHIOPIA."

BERHANE EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING FOR MY POSITION AND
INDICATED HE WOULD PROBABLY PUT IN A GOOD WORD WITH
URBAN DWELLERS' ASSOCIATION (KEBELE) RESPONSIBLE FOR
UNION AND SCHOOL DISTRICT. BUT BERHANE GOT TIED UP
WITH VISITING CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTER FOR NEXT SEVERAL
DAYS AND TOOK NO ACTION, WHEREUPON I SENT EMBOFF TO

SCHOOL MARCH 18 TO REMOVE POSTERS.

4. UNION SUBSEQUENTLY PROTESTED REMOVAL AND THREATENED TO PUT POSTERS BACK UP ON GROUNDS THAT IT WAS ONLY COMPLYING WITH PRACTICE COMMON TO ALL UNIONS THROUGHOUT CITY. ON MARCH 24, POLCOUNS REACHED COMPROMISE AGREEMENT WITH UNION LEADERS, SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY ENTIRE UNION MEMBERSHIP, AUTHORIZING POSTERS TO BE DISPLAYED DURING ACTUAL UNION MEETINGS, BUT NOT DURING REMAINDER OF WEEK, AND FORBIDDING ALL REFERENCES TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ADDIS 01407 02 OF 02 280445Z

US AND TO TERROR OF ANY KIND.

5. MARCH 25 BERHANE RAISED ISSUE WITH ME AGAIN, CLAIMING THAT HE HAD URGED ME TO TAKE NO ACTION UNTIL HE HAD CHANCE TO MEDIATE WITH KEBELE AND THAT ACS TOLD UNION THAT BERHANE HAD AUTHORIZED POSTER REMOVAL. BOTH CLAIMS ARE INCORRECT, SINCE I DID NOT SEEK MOFA ASSISTANCE IN FIRST PLACE AND MADE POINT OF SENDING EMBOFF TO SHCOOL TO INDICATE THAT EMBASSY ASSUMING FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISION. BERHANE SAID HE HAD BRIEFED FONMIN FELLEKE ON MATTER, WHO TOOK POSITION THAT EMBASSY'S UNILATERAL ACTION IN REMOVING POSTERS WAS UNFORTUNATE, SINCE IN PRESENT REVOLUTIONARY ATMOSPHERE, MISUNDERSTANDINGS OVER INCIDENTS OF THIS KIND OFTEN BLEW OUT OF PROPORTION QUICKLY AND CREATED UNNECESSARY FRICTIONS.

6. I EXPLAINED STATUTE LANGUAGE TO BERHANE, ADVISED HIM OF COMPROMISE AGREEMENT WITH UNION, AND POINTED OUT THAT OBJECTIONABLE NATURE OF SOME OF SLOGANS CAUSED VOLATILE REACTION ON PART OF AMERICAN PUPILS AND STAFF. IT WAS PRECISELY TO AVOID SUCH FRICTIONS THAT STATUTE LANGUAGE HAD BEEN WORKED OUT, AND I, AS RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL, DID NOT INTEND TO PERMIT POLITICAL ACTIVITY BY ANYONE CONNECTED WITH SCHOOL, ESPECIALLY ACTIVITIES CALLING US (OR ETHIOPIA) DIRTY NAMES. AT SAME TIME, I EXPRESSED THANKS FOR MOFA COUNSEL. I ASSURED BERHANE THAT EMBASSY APPRECIATED AMERICA DESK'S WILLINGNESS TO SERVE IN MEDIATOR ROLE AND THAT EMBASSY WOULD CONTINUE, AS IN THIS INSTANCE, TO KEEP MOFA CLOSELY INFORMED OF INCIDENTS OF THIS KIND WITH VIEW WHERE POSSIBLE TO PREVENTING PROBLEMS BEFORE THEY BECAME PROBLEMS.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ADDIS 01407 02 OF 02 280445Z

MATHERON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SCHOOLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ADDIS01407
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780133-1237
Format: TEL
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780323/aaaaatnx.tel
Line Count: 172
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 15c912bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3199569
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSTER INCIDENT AT AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL SUMMARY: MOFA EXPRESSED DISPLEASURE TO CHARGE OVER FACT THAT EMBASSY ON ITS OWN AUTHORITY ORDERED REM
TAGS: ASCH, PEPR, SEDU, PROP, ET, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/15c912bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014